

NDI Albania National Survey

July 2007



Introduction

- This public survey was conducted on behalf of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs by AGENDA Institute, an Albanian research firm.
- This research is the property of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and is supported financially by the U.S. Agency for International Development. Its primary purpose is to assist NDI's partners – the political parties and civil society groups in Albania – to improve their ability to represent the interests of and communicate with the people of Albania.
- The results of this survey describe the situation at the time the poll was taken and are not predictive.
- Disclaimer: The poll is based upon a scientific sample. Its findings are statistically representative of the opinions of the Albanian public. The views reported herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

Methodology

- From June 17 through 23, 2007, a representative sample of 1200 adults over the age of 18 were surveyed in their households in face to face interviews.
- Quotas were established by geography and known demographics, such as gender and age, to ensure that the sample was representative of the overall population.
- Interviewers were required to complete one interview at a group of residences and were required to make multiple attempts at the designated residence.
 - No more than one interview was allowed per household.
 - Respondents were chosen by a random process to lessen the chances of bias.
- Interviews were conducted by professionals who conduct interviews frequently.
 - All interviewers were trained on this specific survey instrument and had to demonstrate a high level of proficiency.
- Interviews were verified by professional independent controllers.
- The overall margin of error for survey results is +/- 3.0 %.

Executive Summary

- Forty-five percent of respondents believe Albania is moving in the wrong direction, with 44% saying it is moving in the right direction.
- Jobs, economic conditions and quality of life issues dominate citizen concerns.
- Looking back ten years, most respondents believe that job creation, environmental pollution, support for the elderly and poor, traffic and corruption had either worsened or stayed the same. A majority of respondents think roads and electricity have improved.
- Eighty-seven percent believe elected officials care more about money and power than community needs, while 77% believe "my own deputy cares more about money and power than my needs." However, 59% percent of citizens believe that voting gives them some say about how government runs.
- Sixty percent of citizens want to vote for their president and 75% believe that a popularly elected president would be more responsive to citizen needs. If citizens could choose their president, Bamir Topi would receive 40% of the vote, followed by Alfred Moisiu with 28% and Fatos Nano with 15%.
- Sixty-four percent of citizens prefer continued direct elections for parliament.
- Eighty-six percent of citizens support more women in parliament and support constitutional guarantees for greater representation.
- Voter dissatisfaction translates into low support for incumbent Members of Parliament. Thirty-one percent of citizens believe their deputy deserves to be re-elected, while 61% think it is time to elect someone else.
- Bamir Topi has a 76% favorability rating, followed by Alfred Moisiu at 68%.
- Sixty-one percent of respondents think early elections would be bad for Albania. If early elections are held, voters are evenly split between left and right wing parties.

Direction of the Country

When asked:

- "Would you say that things generally in Albania are headed in the right direction or in the wrong direction?"
 - ✓ 45% thought Albania was headed in the wrong direction.
 - ✓ 44% thought Albania was headed in the right direction.
 - ✓ 9% weren't sure either way.

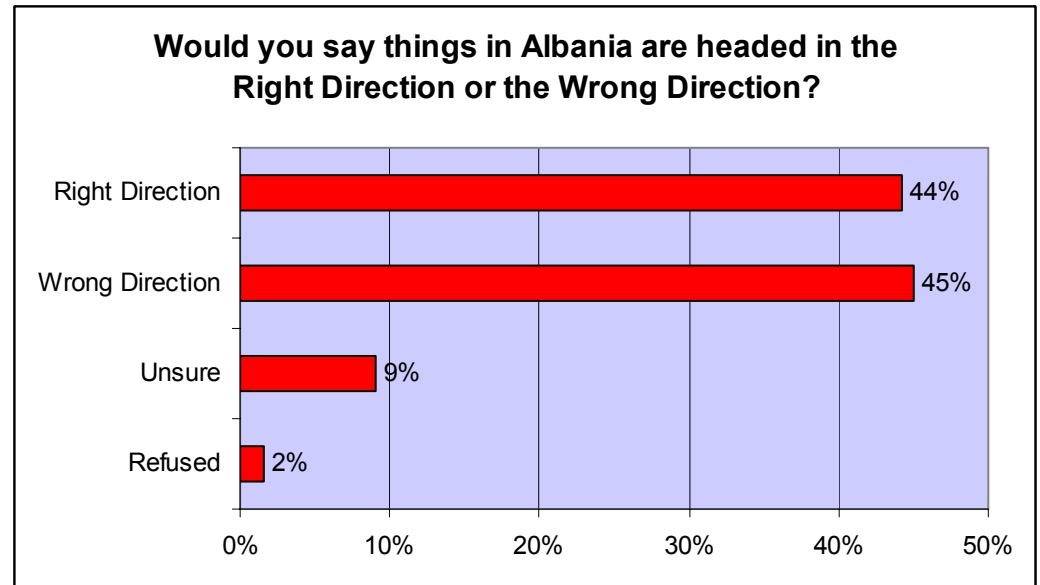
Beneath this overall division, there were significant differences between groups.

Political Affiliation In this survey, those supporting the Democratic Party believed that things in Albania were headed in the "right direction" by a margin of 74%, compared to 18% who felt that things were going in the "wrong direction." Of respondents supporting the Socialist Party, 74% believed that things in Albania were headed in the "wrong direction," compared to 20% who felt things were headed in the "right direction."

Employment Status Fifty percent of employed respondents thought things in Albania were headed in the "right direction" compared to 44% who felt things were headed in the "wrong direction." Unemployed respondents thought things in Albania were headed in the "wrong direction" by a margin of 51% compared to 36% for the "right direction."

Personal Financial Situation Those who described their personal financial situation as "comfortable" were positive about Albania's direction, with 60% saying that things in the country were moving in the "right direction." On the other hand, those saying they "do not have enough money for food and housing" were more negative, with 62% saying that things in Albania were moving in the "wrong direction."

Education There were modest differences among educational groups. Thirty-nine percent of respondents with 8 years or less of education thought things in Albania were headed in the "right direction," while of those with more than 12 years of education, 49% believed that things in the country were going in the "right direction."

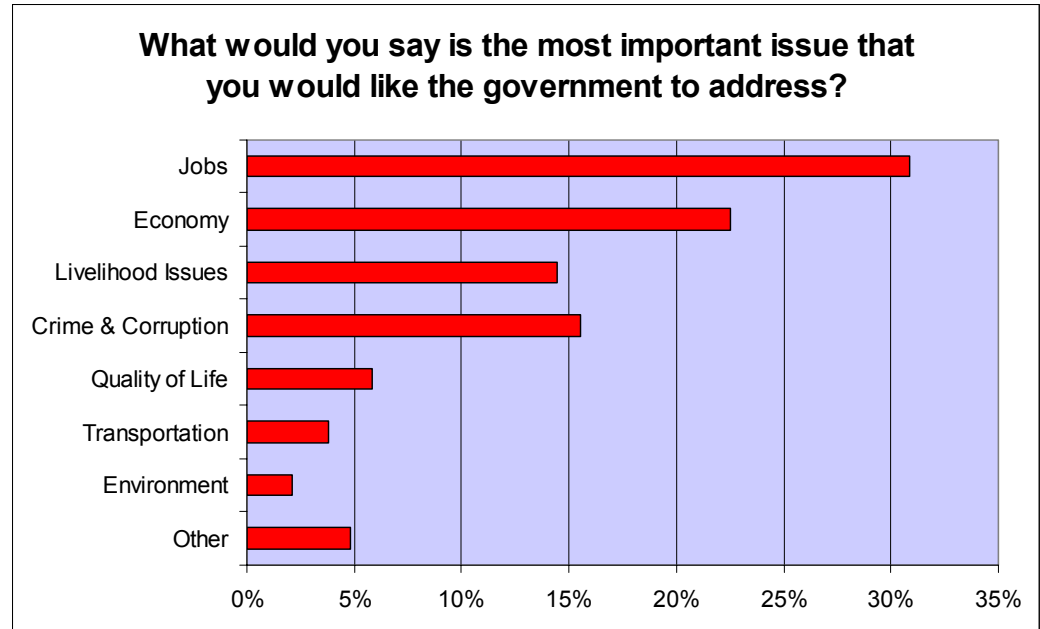


Most Important Issues

Economic and livelihood issues dominated citizen concerns in this nationwide survey. When asked in an open-ended question:

- "What would you say is the most important issue that you would like the government to address?"
 - ✓ 31% said jobs.
 - ✓ 23% named general economic conditions.
 - ✓ 15% identified a combination of livelihood issues: high prices, health care, education, affordable housing, taxes and electricity.
 - ✓ 16% named corruption, crime or illegal construction.
 - ✓ 6% identified declining values and citizen quality of life.
 - ✓ 4% said transportation issues, either roads or traffic.
 - ✓ 2% identified environmental issues.

Jobs Jobs was the top issue for all groups, although there was variation by age, employment status and financial situation. While 36% of respondents between 30 and 39 years of age said jobs was their top issue, 27% of respondents over 50 years of age expressed the same opinion. Of those who were "employed," 28% chose jobs as the top issue, while 48% of "unemployed" listed jobs as the top issue. Finally, 39% of those who "do not have enough money for food and housing" said jobs was the most important issue compared to 28% of those described as "financially comfortable."



Economic Issues A more general desire for government to improve the economy was the second most important issue. This was a particularly important issue to persons who described themselves as self employed (31%) when compared to those who were unemployed (14%), persons "struggling to pay the bills" (25%) when compared to the economically "comfortable" (19%), and supporters of the Socialist Movement for Integration (LSI) (26%) when compared to DP supporters (17%).

Quality of Life Issues Among the various concerns that were included under the general heading of quality of life issues, high prices were particularly important for respondents between the ages of 30 and 39 (8%), and housewives (9%). Health care was more important for respondents over 50 years of age (4%) and housewives (5%). Improved educational opportunities was more important to respondents between the ages of 18 and 29 (4%) and those with more than 12 years of education (3%).

Crime and Corruption There were modest differences regarding the level of concern about illegal activities. Crime was a more important issue to housewives, retirees and urban residents. Corruption was more important to students, employed persons, and those with more than 12 years of education. Illegal construction was more important to men, employed persons, and those with more than 12 years of education.

Issue Trends Over The Past Ten Years

Citizens were asked to think about the past ten years in Albania and to judge whether on a variety of issues things had improved, stayed the same, or gotten worse. On several issues, perceptions varied widely based on the respondent's economic status and also political affiliation.

On the positive side:

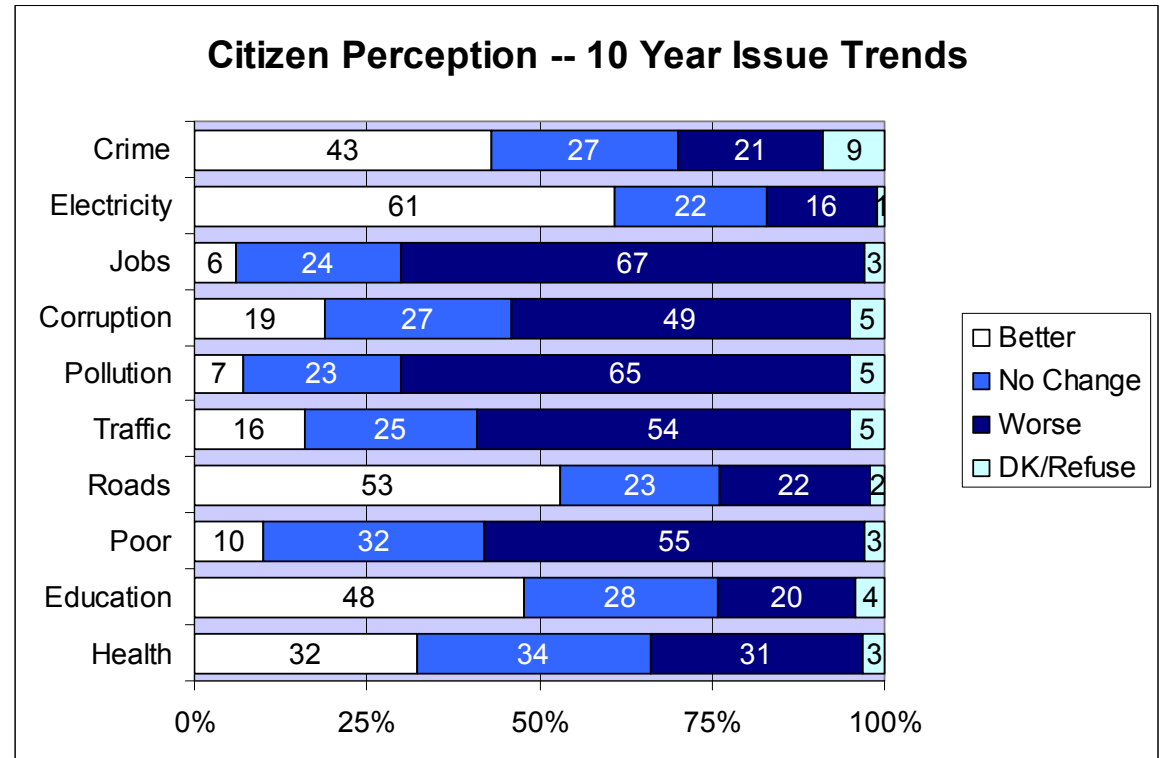
- 61% thought **electricity** had improved, with 22% saying no change.
- 53% thought **roads** had improved, with 23% saying no change.
- 48% thought **education** had improved, with 28% saying no change.
- 43% thought **crime** had decreased, with 27% saying no change.

On the negative side:

- 67% thought **job creation** had gotten worse, with 24% saying no change.
- 65% thought **pollution** had gotten worse, with 23% saying no change.
- 55% thought **support for the poor and elderly** had worsened, with 32% saying no change.
- 54% thought **traffic** had gotten worse, with 25% saying no change.
- 49% thought **corruption** had gotten worse, with 27% saying no change.

On several issues, there was little variation between citizen groups.

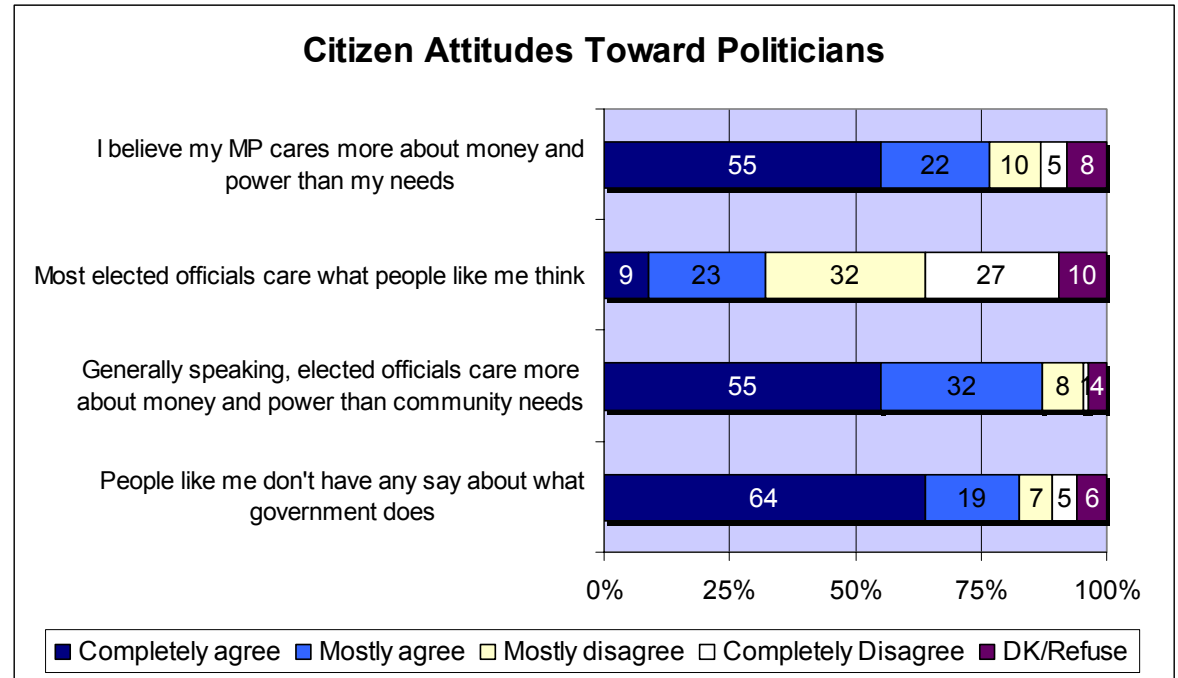
There were, however, issues where socio-economic status played a major difference in perception of improvement. For instance, on health care, 40% of wealthier respondents who were "financially comfortable" thought conditions had improved while only 18% of poorer respondents, who said they lacked enough money for food and housing, agreed. Twenty-one percent of wealthier respondents thought things had gotten worse, while 38% of poorer respondents thought health care access and affordability had deteriorated. Also, on programs for the poor and elderly, 14% of wealthier respondents thought conditions had improved while only 7% of poorer respondents agreed. Forty-four percent of wealthier respondents thought things had gotten worse, compared to 65% of poorer respondents who felt that support for the poor and elderly had deteriorated.



Citizen Attitudes Toward Politicians

Citizens were asked to respond to a series of questions about democracy and their views toward members of parliament. When asked the following questions:

- "I believe my own Deputy cares more about money and power than my needs."
 - ✓ 77% of respondents either "completely agreed" or "mostly agreed".
 - ✓ 15% of respondents either "completely disagreed" or "mostly disagreed" with the statement.
- "Most elected officials care what people like me think."
 - ✓ 32% of respondents either "completely agreed" or "mostly agreed".
 - ✓ 59% of respondents either "completely disagreed" or "mostly disagreed" with the statement.
- "Generally speaking, elected officials care more about money and power than community needs."
 - ✓ 87% of respondents either "completely agreed" or "mostly agreed".
 - ✓ 9% of respondents either "completely disagreed" or "mostly disagreed" with the statement.
- "People like me don't have any say about what government does."
 - ✓ 83% of respondents either "completely agreed" or "mostly agreed" with the statement.
 - ✓ 12% of respondents either "completely disagreed" or "mostly disagreed" with the statement.



Citizens Views on Popular Election of the President

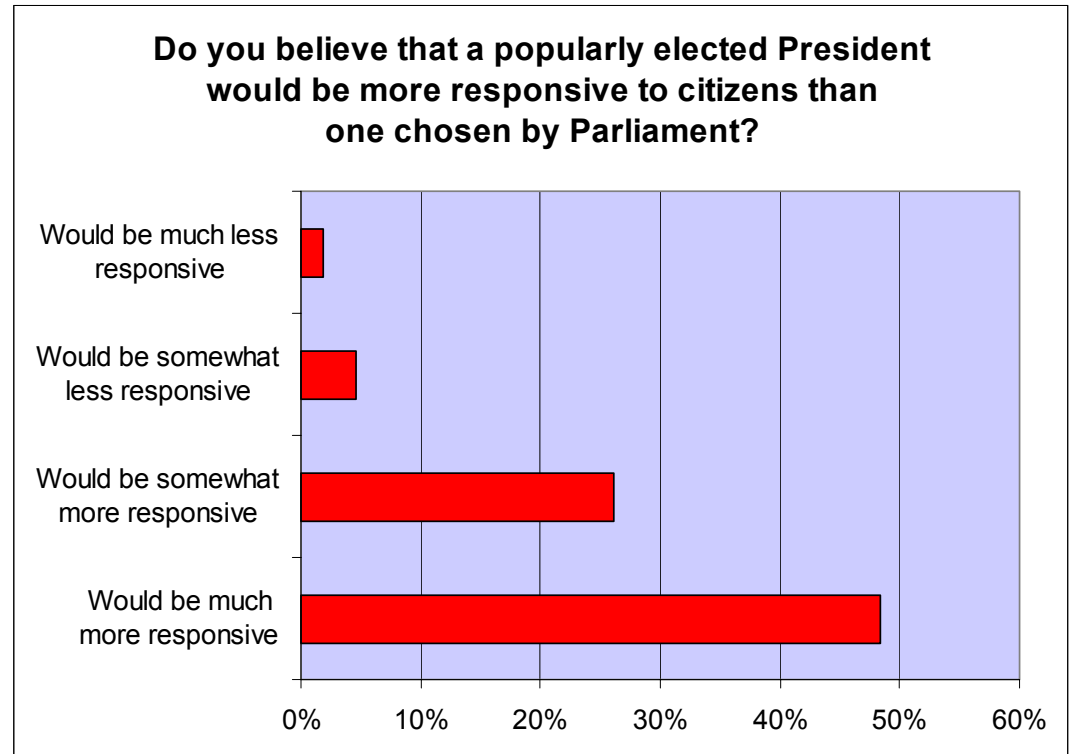
Citizens surveyed strongly supported the idea of a popularly elected president. When asked:

- "Would you prefer that the President of Albania be selected by the Parliament or by citizens through a national election?"
 - ✓ 60% of respondents believed citizens should select the President (including 52% who "strongly believed" so).
 - ✓ 35% of respondents preferred Parliamentary selection.

Respondents also connected direct presidential elections with more responsive government:

- "Do you believe that a President chosen by voters would be more responsive to the needs of the citizens than one chosen by Parliament?"
 - ✓ 75% of respondents said that a citizen-elected President would be either "much more responsive" (49%) or "somewhat more responsive" (27%).
 - ✓ 6% thought a citizen-elected President would be "less responsive" to citizens.

Political Affiliation In this survey, respondents supporting the Socialist Party backed direct presidential elections, with a majority of 67%, compared to 54% for Democratic Party supporters. Sixty-five percent of LSI supporters and 56% of Republican Party supporters also supported direct elections.



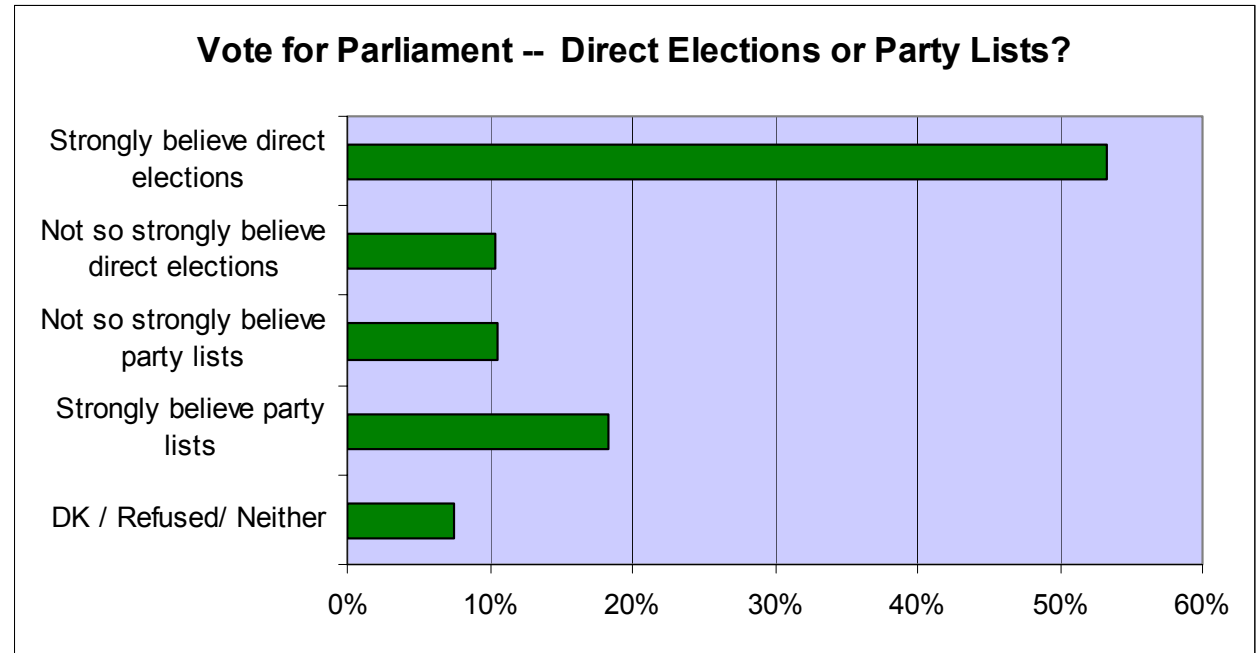
Citizen Views on Parliamentary Elections Systems

When asked:

- "Voting gives people like me some say about how government runs."
 - ✓ 59% of respondents either "completely agreed" or "mostly agreed".
 - ✓ 32% either "mostly disagreed" or "completely disagreed" with the statement.

Citizens strongly supported continued direct elections of their Members of Parliament. When asked:

- "As part of election reform, leaders are considering changing the way you vote for Members of Parliament. Instead of directly selecting your member in your district, like you do for mayor, there is talk of changing the system to proportional party lists, like voting for municipal council. In other words, you would vote for a party, rather than the candidate, and the Members of Parliament would be chosen based on how many votes their party received in the national elections.



How would you prefer to vote for Parliament – by staying with direct elections or moving to proportional party lists?"

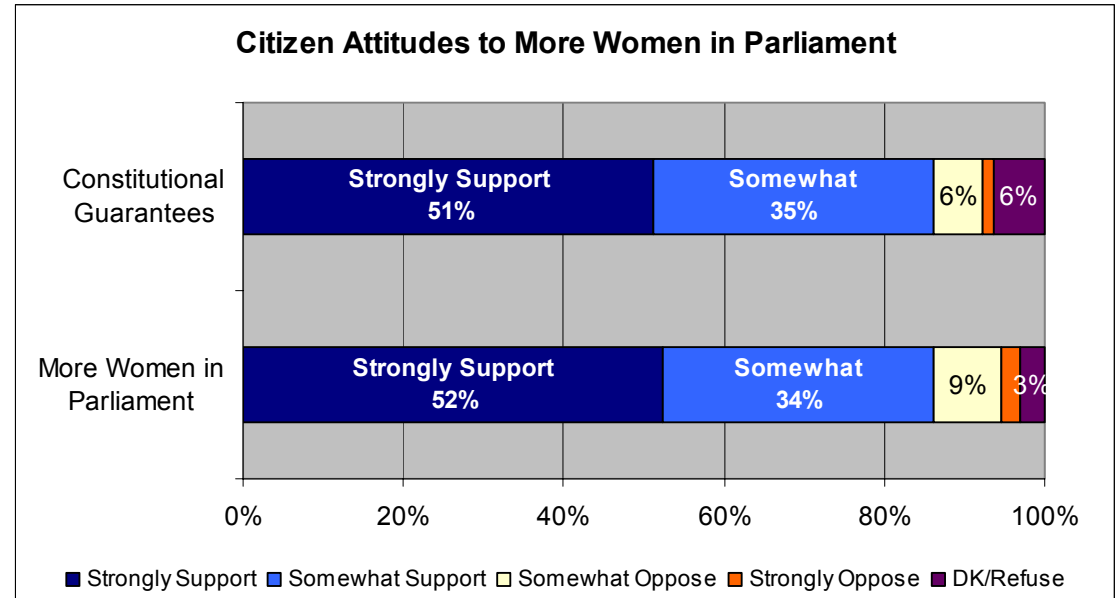
- ✓ 64% of respondents preferred direct elections, including 53% who strongly preferred direct elections.
- ✓ On the other hand, 29% preferred proportional party lists, including 18% who strongly preferred party lists.

This is one issue where party affiliation made no difference.

Support for Women in Parliament

When asked:

- "Would you prefer to see more women elected to Parliament?"
 - ✓ 86% of respondents supported more women elected to Parliament, including 52% who strongly preferred more women.
 - ✓ On the other hand, 11% opposed more women elected to Parliament, including 2% who strongly opposed more women.
- "Would you favor or oppose constitutional guarantees that would require greater representation of women in Parliament?"
 - ✓ 86% of respondents supported constitutional guarantees, including 51% who strongly preferred constitutional guarantees.
 - ✓ 6% opposed constitutional guarantees, and 1% strongly opposed constitutional guarantees.



Gender Ninety-one percent of women supported more women in the Parliament and 88% of women supported constitutional guarantees.

Eighty-one percent of men supported more women in Parliament and 84% of men supported constitutional guarantees.

Political Affiliation Ninety-two percent of LSI supporters either strongly supported or somewhat supported more women in Parliament, followed by Socialist Party (91%), Republican Party (85%), and Democratic Party (83%).

Urban / Rural Ninety percent of urban citizens supported more women in Parliament, while 83% of rural respondents expressed support for greater inclusion of women.

Education Eighty-one percent of respondents with 8 years or less of education either strongly supported or somewhat supported more women in Parliament, while of those with more than 12 years of education, 91% supported more women in Parliament.

Voters' Opinion of Their Member of Parliament

Survey participants were asked about their opinion of their current representative in Parliament.

- "If new Parliamentary elections were held today, do you feel that your deputy deserves to be reelected, or do you think it is time for someone else to represent you?"
 - ✓ 31% thought their deputy deserved to be reelected.
 - ✓ 61% thought it was time for someone else.

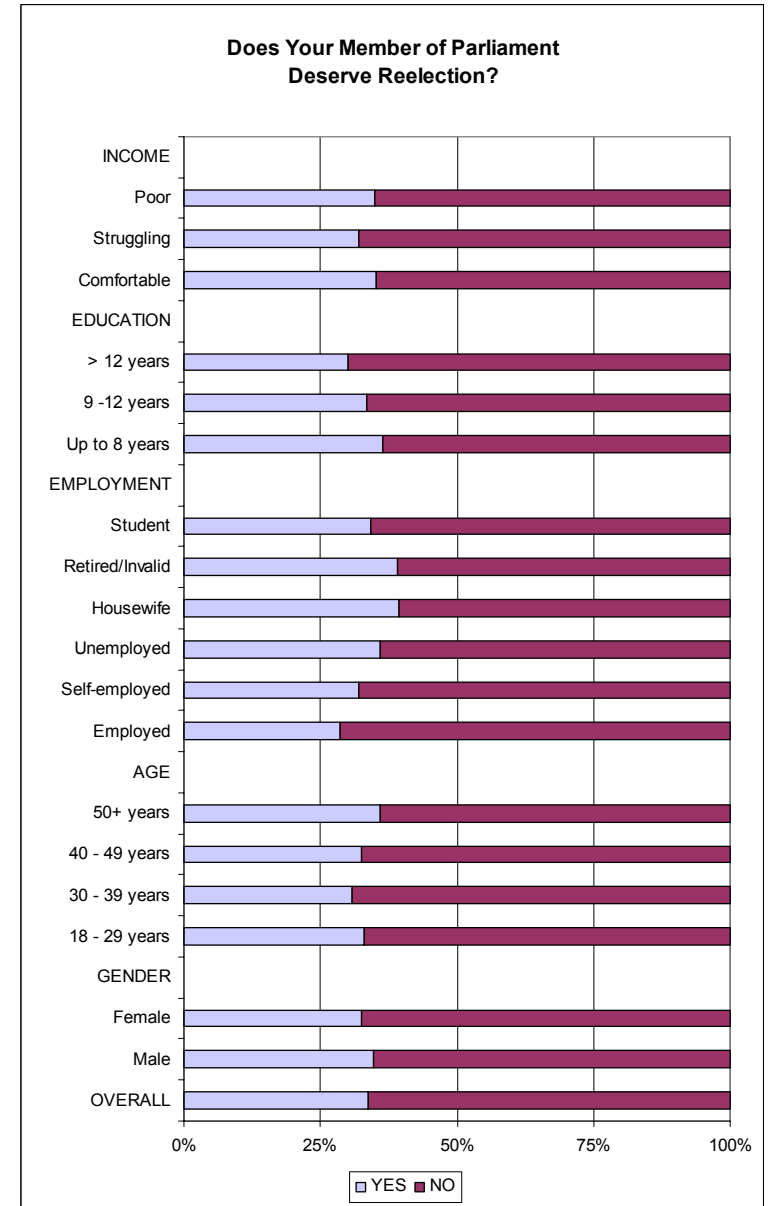
Political Affiliation Forty-five percent of Democratic Party supporters thought their Deputy deserved to be reelected, 23% of Socialist Party supporters and 24% of LSI supporters believed their Deputy deserved reelection.

Age Thirty-three percent of respondents over 50 years of age thought their Deputy deserved to be reelected, compared to 28% of respondents between the ages of 30 and 39.

Employment Status Twenty-seven percent of employed respondents thought their Deputy deserved to be reelected, compared to 36% of housewives and 35% of retirees.

Education While 32% of respondents with up to 8 years of education said they would reelect their Deputy, 28% of respondents with more than 12 years of education said their Deputy deserved reelection.

Economic Status While 32% of respondents who considered themselves economically "comfortable" said they would reelect their Deputy, 29% of those who said that they are "struggling to pay the bills" said their Deputy deserved reelection.



Politician and Party Ratings

Citizens were asked how they felt about several key political figures. Specifically, they were asked:

- "If you could vote for the next President of Albania, and the election were held today, for which candidate would you vote?"

- Bamir Topi 40%
- Alfred Moisiu 28%
- Fatos Nano 15%
- Sabri Godo 5%
- Paskal Milo 2%
- Teodor Laço <1%

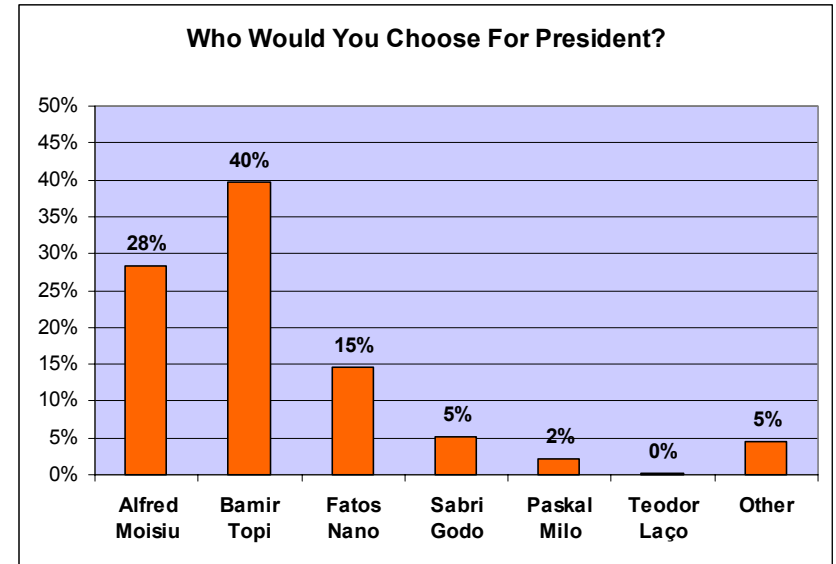
Other names mentioned included; Ben Blushi, Edi Rama, Eduart Selami, Ermelinda Meksi, Gramoz Ruci, Ilir Meta, Ismail Kadare, Jozefina Topalli, Luan Omari, Neritan Ceka, Pandeli Majko, Rexhep Mejdani, and Spartak Ngjela

- "Please tell me if you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or strongly unfavorable opinion of following list of people?"

- ✓ Bamir Topi 76% Favorable / 18% Unfavorable
- ✓ Alfred Moisiu 68% Favorable / 27% Unfavorable
- ✓ Edi Rama 57% Favorable / 39% Unfavorable
- ✓ Ilir Meta 57% Favorable / 34% Unfavorable
- ✓ Jozefina Topalli 50% Favorable / 45% Unfavorable
- ✓ Ben Blushi 47% Favorable / 37% Unfavorable
- ✓ Sali Berisha 44% Favorable / 52% Unfavorable
- ✓ Fatos Nano 33% Favorable / 62% Unfavorable

- "Please tell me if you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or strongly unfavorable opinion of following political parties?"

- ✓ Socialist Movement for Integration 64% Favorable / 33% Unfavorable
- ✓ Democratic Party 60% Favorable / 39% Unfavorable
- ✓ Socialist Party 60% Favorable / 39% Unfavorable
- ✓ Republican Party 50% Favorable / 43% Unfavorable



Favorability by Political Party Preference				
	DP	SP	LSI	RP
Topi	94%	60%	67%	92%
Moisiu	47%	90%	88%	50%
Rama	26%	86%	82%	34%
Meta	37%	72%	91%	49%
Topalli	76%	25%	34%	73%
Blushi	28%	69%	57%	40%
Berisha	84%	11%	12%	67%
Nano	24%	53%	34%	16%

NOTE: Favorability ratings on this page combine "strongly" and "somewhat" categories

Attitudes Toward Early Parliamentary Elections

When asked:

- “If the Parliament cannot agree on a consensus choice for president, forcing early Parliamentary elections, do you think this would be a very positive outcome for Albania, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or a very negative outcome for Albania, or would it have no effect?”
 - ✓ 22% of respondents thought early elections would be positive for Albania.
 - ✓ 61% thought early elections would be negative for Albania, including 39% who thought it would be very negative.
 - ✓ 10% thought elections would have no effect

Political Affiliation Seventy-six percent of Democratic Party supporters thought early elections would be negative, compared to 47% of Socialist Party supporters. Forty percent of Socialist Party supporters thought early elections would be positive, compared to 9% of Democratic Party supporters.

- “If new parliamentary elections were held today, for which party would you vote?”
 - 34% Democratic Party
 - 32% Socialist Party
 - 9% Socialist Movement for Integration
 - 4% Republican Party
 - 3% Christian Democrat Party
 - 1% Democratic Alliance Party
 - 1% Human Rights Union Party
 - 1% New Democrat Party
 - 1% Social Democratic Party
 - 1% Agrarian Environmentalist Party
 - <1% Liberal Democratic Union Party

